Ministry of Environment

Plan for 2017-18

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Government of Saskatchewan

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Statement from the Minister

The Honourable Scott Moe

Minister of Environment

Each year, the Ministry of Environment – along with all other ministries across our government – produces an annual plan that guides its work for the upcoming year and sets a foundation for important work in the years ahead. I'm pleased to present our latest plan to the people of Saskatchewan.

Government Direction and Budget for 2017-18 is focused on *Meeting the Challenge*, finding the right balance between addressing the deficit and ensuring that Saskatchewan people continue to have the programs, services and infrastructure that they need. Government will deliver sustainable, high quality public services in the most cost-effective way possible.

Our mission remains strong. The Ministry of Environment provides science-based solutions and compliance and mitigation measures to protect the environment, safeguard communities and help to ensure balanced economic growth and a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan residents.

We have updated the specific strategies, key actions and performance measures in the 2017-2018 plan with clear overarching goals:

- Reduced risk and harm from environmental contamination
- A clean and safe environment for communities
- Productive, resilient and biologically diverse landscapes
- Increased regulatory certainty and transparency
- High client service satisfaction

Please review this plan to better understand how the Ministry manages and protects Saskatchewan's environment, and visit saskatchewan.ca/environment for information on the many programs, policies and people that bring these goals to life.

Response to Government Direction

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to *Meeting the Challenge* of the current fiscal situation. In so doing, Government will continue to support and encourage economic growth, and ensure government services are affordable and sustainable in the long term. This will include pursuing transformational change so that Saskatchewan people have the programs, services and infrastructure they need now and in the future.

This focus will continue to advance Government toward the realization of Saskatchewan's Vision and goals.

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Saskatchewan's Vision and goals provide the framework for ministries, agencies and partners to align their programs and services and meet the needs of Saskatchewan's residents.

All ministries and agencies will report on progress in their 2017-18 annual reports.

Operational Plan

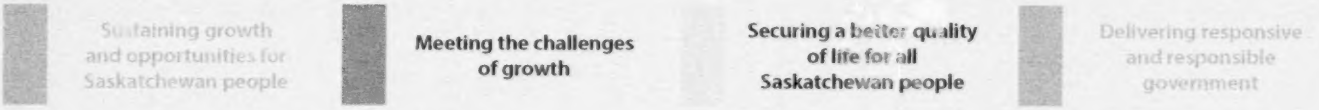
Mandate Statement

The Ministry of Environment's role is to manage the health of Saskatchewan's environment in a respectful, responsible and enforceable manner that balances growth with sustainable development through objective, transparent and informed decision-making and stewardship.

Mission Statement

The Ministry of Environment provides science-based solutions, compliance and mitigation measures aimed at protecting the environment, safeguarding communities and helping to ensure balanced economic growth and a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan residents.

Government Goals


Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people
Meeting the challenges of growth
Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people
Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: working with stakeholders, First Nations, Métis and the public to ensure communities can thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

Ministry Goal

A clean and safe environment for communities

Strategy

Define a provincial vision for improving solid waste management.

Key Actions

- Engage the public, including First Nations and Métis communities, on defining a vision for improving waste management.
- Expand recycling programs, regulations and policies.
- Promote landfill compliance through continued education and engaging the stakeholder-driven Solid Waste Advisory Team.

Strategy

Safeguard human health and safety from risks such as air pollution and wildfire.

Key Actions

- Deploy the mobile air monitoring lab for special investigations in specific locations as needed.
- Deliver wildfire education and awareness to protect people and property and to increase awareness of how wildfire can be used as a sound ecological management tool.

Performance Measures

Air Quality

Air Quality Health Index is good or excellent 95 per cent of the time in five major centres: Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Swift Current and North Battleford.

Recycling

New recycling streams (like household hazardous waste and agricultural plastics) being brought into regulation.

Wildfires

Reduce percentage of extremely large wildfires (greater than 100 hectares) in the Wildland Urban Interface areas by 15 per cent.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

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Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: adopting a cumulative effects approach to environmental management by taking into account the combined effects of past, present and future human activities over time on the environment, economy and society in a particular place.

Ministry Goal

Productive, resilient and biologically diverse landscapes

Strategy

Set direction for long-term landscape management.

Key Actions

- Revise the land use planning approach to better meet current needs and address key landscape sustainability issues.
- Develop cumulative effects modelling tools tailored to Saskatchewan's landscape and priorities.
- Develop criteria and clear guidance on land use and resource allocation opportunities.
- Ensure consistent approach to reforestation of roads and trails in the north.
- Enable the completion of five new and revised forest management plans.

Strategy

Monitor, evaluate and report on the condition of our natural resources.

Key Actions

- Define indicators of landscape health with targets to support future assessment.
- Develop performance measures for sustainable forestry for the 2019 State of the Forest Report.
- Enhance and manage ongoing State of the Environment reporting.
- Refine fisheries assessment and sampling protocols.
- Continue long-term monitoring of invasive and native insects and disease disturbance on Crown land.

Strategy

Maintain the productive capacity of the province's natural resources.

Key Actions

- Complete the Boreal Shield range plans and 2016 caribou population data.
- Implement the long-range Game Management Plan.
- Contribute provincial survey results to the national angling report on sport fishing.
- Work with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation on improving the fish hatchery to ensure lakes continue to be stocked.

Performance Measures

Public Engagement

Increase public/stakeholder participation in ministry surveys, events and monitoring efforts.

Percentage of forest renewal following timber harvest

Sufficiently regenerated area status to increase from previous year.

Reforestation of roads and trails

Number of new roads and trails being approved with appropriate reforestation requirements.

Reports on the status of:

- Woodland caribou herd population in Saskatchewan;
- Fish and wildlife populations;
- Land use and forest resources and planning processes;
- Invasive alien species; and
- Species at risk in Saskatchewan.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people | Meeting the challenges of growth | Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people | **Delivering responsive and responsible government**

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: providing regulatory certainty through recognized standards for informed decision-making, which promote responsive and efficient regulations for a sustainable, competitive and diverse economy.

Ministry Goal

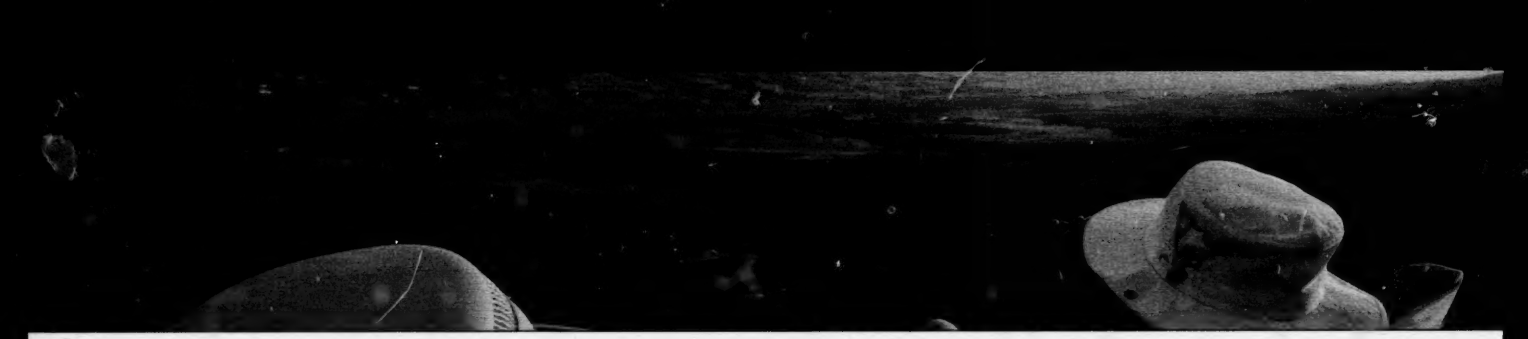
Increased regulatory certainty and transparency for improved accountability

Strategy

Introduce new regulatory tools and approaches to increase clients' options for meeting obligations.

Key Actions

- Strengthen processes and policies that support environmental assessment reviews, including public engagement.
- Work with Code Advisory Committee on developing new Environmental Code chapters.
- Update the Crown resource land regulations to modernize, improve efficiency, and harmonize with similar regulations administered by Ministry of Agriculture.



Strategy

Build a shared understanding of the physical environment risks, compliance obligations, enforcement activities, measures and results.

Key Actions

- Implement a public engagement pilot project related to environmental assessments.
- Keep wildfire prevention and forestry in the public eye via educational tools and programs.
- Monitor client feedback regarding the State of the Environment Report's new online format.
- Clarify policies and procedures for Crown land administration and project reviews to be more efficient and improve client service.
- Deliver compliance and enforcement programs to mitigate risks to the environment and public safety.

Strategy

Develop climate change strategies that balance Saskatchewan's environmental and economic objectives consistent with Saskatchewan's White Paper on Climate Change.

Key Actions

- Continue to develop a Saskatchewan focused framework to manage greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in a low-cost and effective manner.
- Engage with the Government of Canada to advance Saskatchewan interests under emerging national GHG mitigation program and management standards.
- Engage with the Government of Canada and other provinces to develop a Western Canada adaptation strategy.

Performance Measures

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Trends in total greenhouse gas emissions in Saskatchewan and by sector.

Results-Based Regulations

Progress on new or revised results-based regulations, code chapters, standards, programs and policies.

Compliance Rates

Compliance trends in wildlife, fisheries and environmental laws.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: promoting and regulating responsible development and industrial activity, including protection of the environment through management of industrial sites and compliance activities.

Ministry Goal

Reduced risk and harm from environmental contamination

Strategy

Respond effectively to contamination incidents and minimize impacts.

Key Actions

- Make progress on addressing the Provincial Auditor's recommendations on contaminated sites, liabilities, landfills and industrial wastewater.
- Work with Husky Energy on continued follow-up regarding remediation of its 2016 spill and conduct a lessons learned event to improve future emergency response to spills.
- Co-Chair the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment Environmental Emergencies Working Group to improve provincial and territorial cooperation in response to spills.
- Develop criteria for Orphaned Environmentally Impacted Sites Fund investments.
- Commence clean-up of contaminated Crown land to reduce provincial financial liabilities related to contaminated sites.
- Develop financial assurance guidance for regulated industrial sites.

Strategy

Increase client knowledge of contamination, its impact on the environment and compliance obligations.

Key Actions

- Implement the impacted sites database and support implementation of the Code chapters on impacted sites.
- Improve the provincial risk profile through continued auditing of selected sites and industries.
- Increase public reporting of enforcement activities.

Performance Measures

Reportable Spills

Increase compliance on the submission of written spill reports required from responsible parties.

Hazardous materials and dangerous waste

Decrease incidents of non-compliant storage of hazardous materials and dangerous waste.

Contaminated Sites

Report on the status of decommissioned or reclaimed sites.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: delivering effective programs and activities in an efficient and positive client-focused manner.

Ministry Goal

High client service satisfaction

Strategy

Strengthen partnerships between co-regulators, boards, industry and non-government organizations.

Key Actions

- Partner with rural and urban municipal leadership and Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation on expanding the community-based model that was successfully piloted to address littering.
- Work with provincial and national enforcement agencies and First Nations to develop and implement a variety of wildlife management policy and regulatory tools.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities in shared service agreements with Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport and Water Security Agency.
- Collaborate with ministries of Government Relations and Justice to strengthen government's consistency in meeting its duty to consult obligations.
- Lead the development of a provincial approach to sharing and mapping data.
- Increase and enhance online business services.

Performance Measures

Online business

Increase online business transactions with the goal of reaching 80 per cent of all permits/business transactions completed online by 2020.

Highlights

2017-18 Budget Highlights:

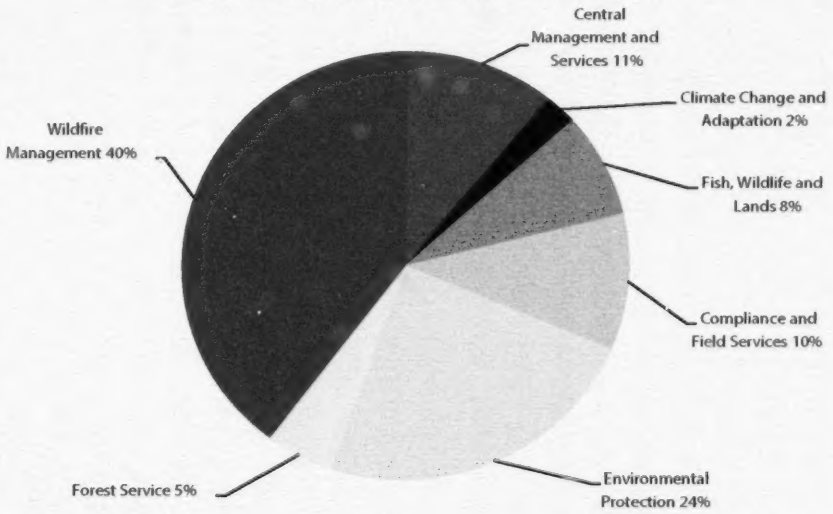
- The budget includes $26.565 million in grant funding for SARCAN to help support the operations of its Beverage Container Collection and Recycling Program, which is an increase of $2.526 million from 2016-17.
- The Ministry's Wildfire Management budget includes an increase of $1.788 million in operational funding to help ensure that the Ministry has adequate funding for average wildfire seasons.
- The budget maintains $100,000 in funding for Aquatic Invasive Species prevention and monitoring and the Ministry will continue to utilize partnerships with other agencies, jurisdictions and organizations to increase the effectiveness of its risk management efforts.
- The budget includes an increase of $1.67 million to support the remediation of seven abandoned sawmill sites, a copper wire burn site and three wildfire management fuel storage sites to reduce the Ministry's environmental liability.
- An additional $1.5 million in capital funding is included in the budget to implement an enterprise law enforcement records management system which will improve the government's ability to conduct compliance and enforcement to better protect the province's natural resources and environment.
- The budget includes $12.172 million to continue the modernization of the Ministry's aerial fleet and associated enhancements of the La Ronge hangar and apron, which represents a reduction of $8.929 million in capital funding.
- The Ministry will begin a two-year process to wind down the Forest Renewal Program which will result in a reduction of $1.64 million in 2017-18 and an additional $300,000 in 2018-19.
- The Ministry will continue to take a landscape-based approach to species planning and management with $670,000 dedicated to the research and development of the provincial boreal caribou conservation plan, a decrease of $35,000 from 2016-17.
- The budget includes an increase to the fees for hunting and angling licences which will result in approximately $886,000 in additional funding to the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund for fish and wildlife conservation and enhancement programming.
- In 2017-18, the Ministry will maintain funding of approximately $2.63 million to continue developing climate change objectives for coal-fired electricity generation, methane reductions and other policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Financial Summary

2017-18 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	18,383
Climate Change and Adaptation	3,971
Fish, Wildlife and Lands	13,443
Compliance and Field Services	17,332
Environmental Protection	40,555
Forest Service	8,347
Wildfire Management	67,534
Total Appropriation	**175,201**
Remediation of Contaminated Sites	(1,670)
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(16,417)
Capital Asset Amortization	12,822
Total Expense	**164,300**
FTE Staff Complement	**859.5**

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: http://www.saskatchewan.ca/budget

Ministry of Environment, Budget 2017-18


Central Management and Services 11%
Climate Change and Adaptation 2%
Fish, Wildlife and Lands 8%
Compliance and Field Services 10%
Environmental Protection 24%
Forest Service 5%
Wildfire Management 40%

For More Information

Please visit the Ministry's website at http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/government-structure/ministries/environment